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Twenty-third special session
Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

Draft report

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Review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action

Further actions and initiatives for overcoming obstacles to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraph 17 of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part II)), at its ____ meeting on ____ June 2000.

2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraph, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

(a) Paragraph 17 was amended to read as follows:

"*Obstacles*: Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between *de jure* and de facto equality has persisted. Notwithstanding substantial improvement of *de jure* equality between women and men, the actual participation of women at the highest levels of national and international decision-making has not significantly changed since Beijing 1995 and gross underrepresentation of women in decision-making bodies in all areas, including, *inter alia*, politics, conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, the economy, the environment and the media, hinders the inclusion of a gender perspective in these critical spheres of influence. Women continue to be underrepresented at the legislative, ministerial and sub-ministerial levels, as well as at the highest levels of the corporate sector and other economic and social institutions. Traditionally assigned gender roles limit women's choices in education and careers and compel women to assume the burden for household responsibilities. Initiatives

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and programmes aimed at women's increased participation in decision-making were hindered by a lack of human and financial resources for training and advocacy for political careers; gender-sensitive attitudes towards women in society, awareness of women to engage in decision-making in some cases; accountability of elected officials and political parties for promoting gender equality and women's participation in public life; social awareness of the importance of balanced participation of women and men in decision-making; willingness on the part of men to share power; sufficient dialogue and cooperation with women's NGOs, along with organizational and political structures, which enable all women to participate in all spheres of political decision-making".